

CALIFORNIA SHRUBS.<sup>1</sup>—This work is a worthy companion to the earlier *Illustrated Manual of Pacific Coast Trees*. It is well conceived, amply illustrated and handsomely bound. The book includes, according to the author's statement in the preface, "all of those vegetative forms classified as woody perennials and semi-woody plants except trees and the succulent-stemmed shrubs of the Cactus Family." Trees are contrasted with shrubs on page 7 of the introduction where it is stated "In trees the stem is a single woody trunk and does not branch for some distance above the ground. In shrubs the woody trunks branch at or near the ground and the stems and branches grow to form bush-like plants". Just where the dividing line may be drawn between a shrub and an herb with a woody perennial base is not disclosed. It is obvious that the decision to call certain plants shrubs and others trees on the one hand and herbs on the other hand must be somewhat arbitrary. In certain genera such as *Salix* and *Quercus* where reasonable doubt may exist in the reader's mind as to a plant's status it would have been helpful if the relatively few species excluded as trees had been included in the keys. This procedure was followed in some cases such as *Eriogonum* where certain herbaceous species are incorporated into the key.

In a book designed primarily for the general public there is always the danger of sacrificing accuracy in keys and descriptions in order to obtain simplicity. McMinn has evaded this pitfall and has included in his introduction a clear and concise explanation of terms to aid the reader.

The major portion of the work consists of keys and descriptions of the various species. The distribution of each species is also noted as well as valuable information on the cultivation of the plants in the garden. Most of the species are illustrated by small but pertinent cuts which are supplemented by many excellent half-tones. At the end is a glossary of botanical terms and a glossary of the meanings of specific names which should be of interest to many users. There is also a supplementary chapter by Fred H. Schumacher on the use of California shrubs in garden design.

I should think that the book would be indispensable to anyone interested in the flora of California.—STUART K. HARRIS, Boston University.

<sup>1</sup> *An Illustrated Manual of California Shrubs*, by Howard E. McMinn. 689 + xi pp.; 775 fig. San Francisco. J. W. Stacey, Inc.

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